

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY: S/S:FORTIZ:JLH

APPROVED BY: S/S-MR ORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 226566 TOSEC 130048

NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT GENEVA 7287 ACTION SECSTATE 23 SEPT

QUOTE

S E C R E T GENEVA 7287

NODIS

FOR SECRETARY, SISCO, ATHERTON FROM SAUNDERS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1,3

TAGS: EG IS PFOR

SUBJECT: GENEVA MILITARY WORKING GROUP--END OF CHAPTER

1. THE EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI NEGOTIATING TEAMS IN THE MILITARY WORKING GROUP REACHED AGREEMENT AT 0500 SEPTEMBER 23 ON THE TEXTS OF THE PROTOCOL AND THE CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT, HAVING TECHNICALLY STOPPED THE CLOCK AT 2335 SEPTEMBER 22. THE PROTOCOL WAS INITIALED BY ISRAEL AND SIGNED BY EGYPT AT 0645.

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2. AGREEMENT CAME AT THE END OF CRESCENDO OF SESSIONS WHICH BEGAN AT THE END OF THE ISRAELI SABBATH AT 1900 SATURDAY AND RAN TILL 0100 SUNDAY (WITH TWO-HOUR DINNER BREAK); 1100-1400 SUNDAY; 1630 SUNDAY TO 0600 MONDAY; AND 1100 MONDAY TO 0500 TUESDAY. THE COM-

BINATION OF FATIGUE AND THE SURREALISTIC CHARACTER OF THE DRAGGING HOURS OF THE FINAL SESSION AS THE ISRAELIS IN JERUSALEM AGONIZED THROUGH THEIR LAST DECISIONS LEFT NO ONE WITH ELATIONS HERE--JUST RELIEF

IF THERE IS ANY FEELING AT ALL.

3. PROTOCOL, WHICH WILL BE PUBLIC, AND CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT, WHICH WILL NOT BE RELEASED, PLUS ATTACHED MAPS COMPLETE THE DOCUMENTATION AGREED HERE. EGYPTIAN IDEA OF YET A THIRD PAPER--PROPOSALS BY THE CHAIRMAN-- WAS ON SUNDAY NIGHT FOLDED BACK INTO THE CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT AS A LAST SECTION. LEGAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROTOCOL AND STATEMENT IS: "PROTOCOL IS AN INRL PART OF AGREEMENT. STATEMEN IS EQUALLY BINDING ON THE PARTIES." THIS DEVICE COULD PERMIT IT TO BE SAID WHEN PROTOCOL IS PUBLISHED THAT THERE IS NO OTHER PART OF THE AGREEMENT.

4. HERE IS WHERE PARTIES HAVE COME OUT ON MAIN REMAINING ISSUES:

A. ACCESS TO SURVEILLANCE STATIONS: ISRAELIS AGREED TO USE ACCESS ROAD FROM NORTH RATHER THAN GIDI ROAD, ALTHOUGH THEY WILL STILL HAVE THEIR COMMUNICATIONS CABLES AND WATER LINE ALONG GIDI ROAD AND WILL NEED TO MAKE OCCASIONAL MAINTENANCE CHECKS THERE. GIVEN GAMASY'S AND FAHMY'S STRONG FEELINGS, THIS WAS IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT.

B. OIL TRANSFER: (1) ISRAELIS STATED PRINCIPLE THAT ALL EQUIPMENT WILL BE LEFT WHICH IS NEEDED TO OPERATE OIL FIELDS. (THAT STILL LEAVES ISRAELIS TO DEFINE WHAT IS NEEDED, BUT EGYPTIANS SEEM SATISFIED.) (2) EGYPTIANS ARE KEEPING OPEN OPTION OF CONTINUING ABU RODEIS-BELAYIM PRODUCTION RATHER THAN MAKING SECRET

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CONTROLLED CLOSEDOWN AS THEY HAD ANNOUNCED FRIDAY NIGHT.

C. JOINT COMMISSION: AFTER THREE HOURS, THEY AGREED TO MEET "AT AGREED DATES" RATHER THAN "REGULARLY"; THEY WILL MEET "IN THE BUFFER ZONE" RATHER THAN AT A SET HEADQUARTERS; AGREEMENT TO BE REACHED BY DISCUSSION. THERE IS STILL ONE POINT SUBJECT TO SEPARATE INTERPRETATION AND FUTURE DISPUTE IN THAT THE ISRAELIS WANT TO ASSIGN A PERMANENT LIAISON OFFICER TO STAY AT THE PLACE OF THE MEETINGS, WHILE THE EGYPTIANS INSIST IT IS ENOUGH TO HAVE LIAISON OFFICERS AVAILABLE AT THE CALL OF THE CHIEF COORDINATOR.

D. EGYPTIAN CIVILIANS IN BUFFER ZONE: THIS WAS THE SLEEPER AND INCREASINGLY THE CAUSE OF THE HANG-UP AFTER ABOUT 0200 MONDAY--THAT IS, THROUGH THE LAST TWENTY-TWO HOURS OF NEGOTIATIONS. AT ABOUT 0200 MONDAY, MEMBER OF EGYPTIAN DELEGATION CAME TO ME TO ASK ADVICE ABOUT WHETHER EGYPT SHOULD RE-OPEN THIS ISSUE. FRIDAY NIGHT, EGYPTIANS--ALREADY FED UP WITH ENDLESS HAGGLING OVER NUMBERS OF EGYPTIAN POLICE IN SOUTHERN AREA--ANNOUNCED THAT THEY WOULD DROP ISSUE OF CIVILIANS IN BUFFER ZONE. THEY WERE REACTING TO AN ISRAELI WORKING PAPER ON SUBJECT WHICH THEY FOUND EXCESSIVELY RESTRICTIVE. THEIR POSITION WAS THAT ISRAEL SHOULD HAVE NO SAY IN DETERMINING WHAT EGYPTIAN CIVILIANS DO ON EGYPTIAN TERRITORY; THEY WOULD WORK THE WHOLE SUBJECT OUT WITH THE UN LATER. ISRAELIES, FORGETTING HOW IN MARCH THEY HAD STRESSED HIGH POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF "OPEN BRIDGE" BETWEEN EGYPT AND EL ARISH/GAZA, BENT THEIR EFFORTS ON LIMITING THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE BUFFER ZONE, RESTRICTING THEIR MOVEMENT, AND EMPHASIZING SPECIAL CHARACTER OF ZONE. EARLY PART OF DISCUSSION CONCENTRATED ON WRITING SUBJECT INTO PROTOCOL, AND AGREEMENT WAS NOT FAR AWAY WHEN JERUSALEM SUDDENLY REJECTED ALL THE WORK UP TO THAT POINT AND IN A MOVE DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND DIRECTED THE TEAM HERE TO SEEK A MUCH LESS SIGNIFICANT LETTER FROM MAGHDOUB TO SIILASVUO COVERING FOUR POINTS: (A) GIVING A FACTUAL DEFINITION OF THE POPU-
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LATED AREA IN AN EFFORT TO ESTABLISH THAT MOVEMENT IS RESTRICTED; (B) NOTING OBLIQUELY THAT PEOPLE IN EL ARISH COULD CONTINUE TO GO INTO THIS AREA TO WORK; (C) LIMITING NUMBER OF THOSE RETURNING TO 2000; (D) MENTIONING THAT SPECIAL IDENTIFICATION CARDS STAMPED BY UNEF WOULD BE ISSUED. THIS SEEMS TO ME LESS VALUABLE TO ISRAELIS THAN HAVING PRINCIPLES ESTABLISHED--THOUGH IN LESS DETAIL--IN CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT WHICH IS BINDING ON BOTH PARTIES. ONE EXCEPTION TO MY COMMENT IS THAT STATEMENT ON 2000 RETURNEES SOMEWHAT EASIER IN THIS CONTEXT. E. ISRAEL DID NOT CHANGE TAKEOVER DATE FOR RAS SUNDAR.

F. EGYPTIAN POLICE UNIT IN SOUTHERN AREA TOTALS 700, 500 OF WHOM ARMED, REST ADMINISTRATIVE.

G. EGYPTIANS CAN BEGIN GOING TO THEIR SURVEILLANCE SITE DECEMBER 28.

5. AS I HAVE REFLECTED BEFORE, I THINK THE US ROLE--ABSENT FROM THE ROOM BUT FULLY INFORMED--TURNED OUT JUST RIGHT. HAD WE BEEN IN THE ROOM, WE WOULD HAVE

BEEN DRAWN INTO EACH ISSUE AT LEAST DURING COFFEE BREAKS,
AND THIS COULD HAVE PUT US IN COMPETITION WITH CHAIRMAN.

6. AFTER INITIAL NERVOUSNESS IN BOTH DELEGATIONS ON
FIRST DAY OR TWO, FOR NEXT TEN DAYS PARTIES WORKED
PRETTY MUCH UNDER OWN STEAM WITH OCCASIONAL EXCEPTIONS
LIKE OIL TRANSFER WHEN THEY INVITED ME TO MEET THEIR
EXPERTS. AS TENSION MOUNTED, OBSTACLES SEEMED HIGHER,
AND DEADLINE APPROACHED, EGYPTIANS PARTICULARLY BEGAN
COMING TO ME WITH INCREASINGLY REGULARITY UNTIL DURING
LAST THIRTY-SIX HOURS THEY WERE REGULARLY IN AND OUT
OF MY OFFICE. FOR MOST PART WHAT THEY SOUGHT WAS
MORAL SUPPORT, AND I SCRUPULOUSLY AVOIDED STATING
WASHINGTON POSITION ON ANY ISSUE EXCEPT WHERE WASHINGTON POSITION
CLEAR AND PREVIOUSLY STATED, AS ON ISSUE OF OIL FIELD EQUIPMENT.

7. ONE EXCEPTION WHERE I INVOLVED MYSELF -- WITHOUT ANY IMPLICA-
TION OF WASHINGTON BACKING -- WAS ISSUE OF CIVILIANS IN BUFFER
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ZONE. EGYPTIAN QUESTION TO ME WAS: SHOULD THEY RE-OPEN SUBJECT
AFTER HAVING SAID FRIDAY THEY DID NOT WANT IT IN PROTOCOL. I
SAID ONLY WAY TO ANSWER QUESTION WAS TO FIND OUT WHAT ISRAELIS
REALLY WANTED. THEY ASKED ME TO TALK TO ISRAELIS SO THEY COULD
PRESERVE FREE HAND IN DECIDING WHETHER TO RE-OPEN OR NOT. I
SPOKE TO GAZIT OUTSIDE AS MAIN MEETING WENT ON AND, WITH SIILAS-
VUO'S ENCOURAGEMENT, SAT WITH TWO SIDES IN REDUCING POSITION TO
WRITING. WHEN ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN FORM OF WORKING PAPER ON POSI-
TION TO BE INCLUDED IN CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT, I STEPPED ASIDE AND
GAZIT AND MAGHDOUB BEGAIN TALKING TOGETHER.

8. ALTHOUGH I WANT TO AVOID SITTING IN JUDGMENT, I BELIEVE I
SHOULD NOTE FOR FUTURE REFERENCE THAT SAME TWO ASPECTS OF ISRAELI
PRACTICE WE HAVE NOTED IN SHUTTLES WERE PRESENT HERE -- LACK OF
PERSPECTIVE AND PRIORITY IN SELECTING ISSUES FOR CONCENTRATED
ATTENTION AND FAILURE TO GRASP OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD SOUND WORK-
ING RELATIONSHIP WITH EGYPTIANS. EGYPTIANS THEMSELVES MADE THESE
POINTS AND IT WAS INTERESTING HOW OFTEN EGYPTIANS USED WORDS WE
HEAR SO OFTEN FROM ISRAELIS: DO THEY REALLY WANT PEACE? HOW CAN
YOU DO BUSINESS WITH THESE PEOPLE? EVEN MOST HAWKISH MEMBER OF
EGYPTIAN DELEGATION COMMENTED YESTERDAY THAT HE FELT SORROW AND
PITY FOR ISRAELIS BECAUSE OF THEIR "TRAGIC" INABILITY TO SEIZE
OPPORTUNITY BEFORE THEM. MOST STRAIGHTFORWARD AND GOOD-HEARTED
MEMBER EGYPTIAN TEAM LEFT DISILLUSIONED, SAYING HE HAD DONE EVERY-
THING HE COULD TO MEET ISRAELIS HALFWAY BUT WITHOUT RESPONSE.
EGYPTIAN FRUSTRATION WITH EIGHT HOURS OF ISRAELI BACKING FILLING
-- WITH CONSTANT JERUSALEM INTERVENTION -- OVER INSIGNIFICANT IS-
SUES ON CIVILIANS IN BUFFER ZONE LED THEM TO COME TO ME AT 0300
THIS MORNING AND ASK ME TO TAKE THEIR POSITION WITH A BLANK CHECK,
TALK WITH THE ISRAELIS, AND "PUT AN END TO THIS MISERY" AND TO IS-
RAELI INABILITY TO COME TO DECISION. (I EVENTUALLY MANEUVERED
THEM BACK INTO NEGOTIATION WITH ISRAELIS.)

9. OTHER ASPECT OF ISRAELI NEGOTIATING STYLE -- WHICH SOME MEMBERS OF ISRAELI DELEGATION THEMSELVES SPOKE OF HARSHLY AT END -- WAS DIFFICULTY IN BRINGING DECISION TO A HEAD BECAUSE OF LARGE NUMBER OF EXPERTS INVOLVED IN JERUSALEM, ALL WITH A SAY.

10. ON EGYPTIAN SIDE, BAD CASE OF NERVES FROM ARAB CRITICISM CREATED UNDERLYING TENACITY ON NUMBER OF ISSUES WHERE THEY DID NOT WANT TO APPEAR IN ARAB WORLD TO BE COMPROMISE THEIR SOVEREIGNTY.

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THIS, AS I REPORTED EXTENSIVELY LATE LAST WEEK, GAVE RISE TO DIFFICULT APPROACH TO NEGOTIATION FOR COUPLE OF DAYS, BUT THEY STABILIZED AGAIN LAST TWO DAYS. DELEGATION ALSO PLAGUED AT TIMES BY FAILURE TO DO HOMEWORK BUT AT OTHER TIMES IS QUITE GOOD. KEY POINT FOR NEAR FUTURE IS THAT EGYPTIANS LEAVE HERE WITH SENSE THEY DID GOOD JOB IN FACT OF WHAT THEY SAW AS DISTRESSING ISRAELI APPROACH BUT WITH NO ELATION AND PERHAPS NOT MUCH SATISFACTION EXCEPT THAT THEY GOT JOB DONE IN CREDITABLE WAY.

11. TWO ISSUES TO FOLLOW CLOSELY, IT SEEMS TO ME, ARE:

A. HOW EGYPTIANS PREPARE FOR AND MANAGE MOVE OF CIVILIANS INTO BUFFER ZONE. DO THEY SEEM TO BE PRIMING PEOPLE TO GO BACK OR LETTING NATURE TAKE ITS COURSE?

B. KEEP AN EYE ON WHAT EQUIPMENT ISRAELIS INDEED DECIDE TO LEAVE IN OIL FIELDS.

12. WITH THIS, PRESENT CHAPTER OF GENEVA MILITARY WORKING GROUP CLOSES.

13. DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO CAIRO AND TEL AVIV.DALE

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, TREATY SIGNATURE, CAT-C, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MEETING REPORTS, MILITARY POLICIES, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE226566
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: S/S:FORTIZ:JLH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 XGDS-1,3
Errors: n/a
Film Number: N750004-0612
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197509105/baaaaciz.tel
Line Count: 254
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 JUN 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <06 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: PFOR, EG, IS
To: SECRETARY
CAIRO
TEL AVIV
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006